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October 14, 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing for Frank Sullivan, Chief Counsel,
Senate Armed Services Committee

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1. Messrs. [redacted]

OSR;

OCI;

[redacted]

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[redacted] OSR; [redacted] OLC; and I spent better than two hours today discussing NATO and Warsaw Pact postures, arms standards in NATO, and Soviet naval activities in the Mediterranean. This briefing was requested by Mr. Sullivan to provide him with background before he, Senator Nunn, and Senator Bartlett visit various NATO installations in early November.

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2. [redacted] began the briefing with a general description of the balance of forces pointing out that the Soviets were in a somewhat better position than NATO on tanks and artillery while NATO has the edge in tactical air. In general, the two forces tend to balance each other. Mr. Sullivan raised the question of warning time before a Pact attack. We replied that we felt it would take four days to a week to get the forward divisions in position and that within this period there would certainly be sufficient indications to alert policymakers. We pointed out to Mr. Sullivan that a campaign in Europe would not take place in a vacuum, but would be preceded by a number of things elsewhere in the world including heightened political tension. We also discussed the readiness of the European satellite forces noting in response to Sullivan's query that military planners would have to assume these divisions would do what they were told, but in the real world we doubted that the Soviets would feel the Czechs and Poles were completely reliable allies. There was a good deal of discussion about qualitative force comparison. We took the position that while it is possible to compare characteristics of various weapons systems, it was quite difficult to compare the human factor.

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3. [redacted] discussed recent steps which suggest some progress may be made in NATO on weapons standardization. He informed Sullivan that there is some reason to feel the Germans and French are beginning to look more favorably on US participation in some standardization forum. [redacted] described Soviet naval posture in the Mediterranean; said it was closely keyed in its role to that of Soviet ground forces in Europe; and that, because of the lack of base facilities, would have resupply difficulties after the opening round in either conventional or nuclear war.

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4. Mr. Sullivan wants us to brief Senator Nunn along these same lines in late October. He asked that we focus particularly on the warning time question; the reliability of the European satellites; and lay out the steps which have taken place in weapons standardization. He also asked that we try to determine any relationship between US-West German cooperation on tank production and Bonn's more forthcoming approach to standardization.

5. It probably would be desirable to have the same briefing team for Senator Nunn as they are now familiar with the general line of questioning. All hands will be notified when we receive a date.

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